

What should I be aware of if my child is afraid of failure?

Children often feel anxious before activities such as taking a test, competing in a sport, or performing in front of a group. When they are afraid of failure, it causes them to bypass risks and not put forth their best effort to obtain goals. Parents often fall into rationalizing this behavior or pushing children to succeed to the point that they feel their parents' love for them will decrease if they do not meet their expectations. Children tend to avoid failure by not participating in activities and making excuses if they do not perform to the extent that adults think that they should.

Parents need to understand that failure, like success is inevitable and essential to children's growth as individuals. Failure allows children to make connections between their actions and the consequences that follow so that they are able to learn from their mistakes. It promotes life skills such as problem solving, patience, and determination. Failure and success are seen as motivators for children to overcome obstacles and achieve their goals.

Parents are encouraged to offer praise, support, and unconditional love for their children despite their failures. Commending children on their successes and offering guidance creates self-esteem and future self-confidence. Reassurance from their parents allows children to understand that some extent of failure is normal and is not a negative reflection on themselves as individuals.